

BEFORE GOVERNORS
AND KINGS



Q. P. sent to R. R. L 10/1/86

REFERENCE LIBRARY OF
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

2 PARK STREET, BOSTON



NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THE SHELVES
EXCEPT BY PERMISSION OF
THE LIBRARIAN

REFERENCE LIBRARY * HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO. * BOSTON, MASS.

*Archive
Collection*



This book may not leave the Office
and if borrowed must be returned within 7 days

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

BY

CLARENCE D. USSHER



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge
1918

COPYRIGHT, 1917 AND 1918, BY CLARENCE D. USSHER

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Published October 1918

PREFACE

Two of my experiences related in *An American Physician in Turkey* have meant so much to me and to others, that in response to a demand for the narratives in a form suitable for wide distribution I am issuing this "gift book."

I have told the story of the conversations with the Mohammedan Governor-General in scores of so-called "orthodox" churches to Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Disciples, Lutherans, etc. I have told it to audiences of Unitarians, Friends, Mohammedans, Freethinkers; I have told it in rescue missions, flop-houses, military cantonments, colleges and schools; and people of all creeds have said to me, regarding its explanation of the way of salvation and of the Trinity, "Why, we can accept that!" The essential oneness of all believers in God regardless of name or creed has been impressed on my mind. The war is breaking down denominational walls which should never have separated us more widely than temperamental differences separate families and relatives.

I know two related families the members of which

PREFACE

live in harmony, though representing five different denominations. The eldest daughter in one of these families is deeply religious, fond of form and ceremony, æsthetic in her tastes, quiet and systematic in her habits, determined to have everything about her in order and on time. Her red-headed brother comes into the house with a "whoop and a holler," shakes the house with his shout of "Hello, Sis, where are you?" shies his hat into a corner, snatches up his mother, whirls her around and sets her down in a chair with a hearty kiss, chases the dog or his little brother around the room, and when his sister protests, "Oh, Charlie, don't be so boisterous! put your hat where it belongs — do be more orderly!" answers, "Aw, Sis, don't be so prim!" and sets all to laughing with a funny story. To compel these two to worship in the same way would be cruel. She is a natural Episcopalian while Charlie must shout "Hallelujah!" and "Praise the Lord!" and is most at home in a Methodist church. The younger sister is neither so æsthetic in her tastes nor so fond of form and ceremony as the elder, and has gravitated with her high-school classmates to the Presbyterian church.

The eldest daughter in the other family is of a submissive spirit. She dislikes the responsibility of

PREFACE

making decisions and must have some one in whom to confide. To her mind humiliation and humility are synonyms; the confession of her sins is humiliating and therefore a duty. It is not difficult to see why the confessional of the Roman Church brings comfort and satisfaction to her soul. So do its symbols and its ceremony, since beauty in art and nature appeals to her as the spoken word cannot. To her brother her mental attitude is almost incomprehensible. Jolly, opinionated, he resembles his cousin Charlie in disposition, but has become a Baptist instead of a Methodist.

As long as there are differences of temperament there will be differences in the form of worship — and “It is God who maketh us to differ.” The various branches of the Church of God will coöperate in the advancing of His Kingdom on Earth when men realize that even the most divergent denominations are as truly one in essentials as are the members of a family, and this little book will serve its purpose if it helps one soul toward this realization.

C. D. U.

Auburndale, Massachusetts

August 28, 1918.

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

SIR AHMED was a Circassian nobleman living in Constantinople in Abdul Hamid's time. He was a big fellow, over six feet in height, with a massive head; a man of dominating personality, quick-tempered, fearless, accustomed to having his own way. His education in Turkey had been above the ordinary and he had also spent some time in French universities.

Spies aroused the suspicion in Abdul Hamid's mind that Sir Ahmed was a "Young Turk"; that is, a member of the Turkish Revolutionary Party. He belonged to too prominent a family to be as summarily removed as many had been by the Sultan, but the wily monarch appointed him Mutessarif of Amasia, in the province of Sivas, and said to him with a warning look before sending him away:—

"Do as you please in Amasia, but do not come back to Constantinople or your life will be forfeit."

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

In Amasia the young man had a Circassian rival who had sent valuable horses and other presents to Abdul Hamid and had in return been permitted to rob and plunder as he pleased; whoever crossed him was disposed of either by the Sultan or himself. He had become so daring that at one time, I have been told, he carried off from the very gate of the city of Marsovan forty-two wagons loaded with merchandise on its way from Europe and America to merchants in the interior via Samsun, the Black Sea port. Valis and police had felt compelled to close their eyes to his depredations.

Sir Ahmed called his chief of police and ordered him to bring this robber chief before him.

“Oh, but can I? How can I?”

“You bring him, or your head will go.”

With a low salaam the chief of police withdrew. Whether he gave the Circassian an invitation to a feast, or told him the Vali had some new honor for him from the Sultan, or wanted his advice about the government of the district, I do not know. Turkish diplomats use such methods. However it was managed, the Circassian came one evening to be the guest of the

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

Mutessarif. Sir Ahmed informed him that he would be hanged in the morning.

“Oh, no, I will not; I’ll appeal to the Sultan; he is my friend.”

“I am Governor here, and the Sultan has nothing to say about it.” And the noted and powerful robber chief was hanged the next morning. The fear of that Governor fell upon all the district; robbers sought refuge in other provinces, and his fame spread far.

When Abdul Hamid was deposed, Sir Ahmed being in the inner councils of the Young Turk Party was appointed Vali of the province of Van. At this time the success of our schools and hospital was attracting attention. Our treaties with Turkey gave us the right to own property and real estate, to conduct and prosecute our legitimate business, and to have our premises and persons inviolable by Ottoman officials. When the Turk took Constantinople he found certain capitulations¹ in force and for his own advantage saw fit to perpetuate them. The capitulations renounced all rights over the person and property of the foreigner, who was to be amenable only to his own Government through his consuls. These

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

privileges, granted by the Sultan at first for his own benefit, were later demanded by the Franks as a right and Francis I had them included in a treaty with Suleiman the Magnificent in the sixteenth century. The French treaty of 1740 was made the basis for subsequent arrangements with other nations. America negotiated a treaty granting these privileges to Americans without reference to the capitulations, and also by the "favored nation" clause secured to American citizens all privileges which should hereafter be granted to any other most favored nation.

Sir Ahmed was so tyrannical that, harking back to Mohammedan law, which says that a foreigner may live in the country and do business unmolested for a year, but at the end of the year must either become a Mohammedan, quit the country, or become a slave and pay tribute, he dared to announce that he would have the American doctor deported and the hospital and schools closed.

Before deporting us he, as a conscientious Mohammedan, would give us a chance to accept his faith. It was Ramazan, when Mohammedans fast absolutely from sunrise to sunset throughout a lunar month. On the fifteenth day of this fast

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

many Mohammedans invite "infidels" to an evening feast for the purpose of converting them to Islam. To such a banquet the Vali invited the male missionaries of Van, Protestant and Catholic. Mr. Yarrow was confined to the house with a malarial attack and was unable to be present. Dr. Raynolds and I were the first to arrive, the other guests appearing after we were seated at the table, which was furnished "à la Frank;" it would have been a sin for a Moslem to delay his acceptance of Allah's bounty, so, although these others had been expected momentarily, we did not wait.

Sir Ahmed sat at the head of a long table, Dr. Raynolds was at his right, and next to him a Chaldean Catholic Bishop. The writer was at the Vali's left, and around the table were Catholic priests and Turkish officers.

After we had feasted on a delicious thirteen-course dinner, a sweet and a meat served alternately, each dish a separate course, the Vali opened the religious conversation by addressing the black-and-crimson-robed Bishop: —

"My Lord Bishop, will you kindly tell me what you think I must do to enter Paradise?"

"Your Excellency," replied the Bishop, "if

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

you will permit me, I believe that God, for Jesus Christ's sake, pardons my sins and will receive me into Paradise."

"No, sir," said Sir Ahmed; "I cannot accept that, for I believe God to be absolutely just and righteous and one who is absolutely just cannot show favoritism. I am Vali here and my power is practically absolute; you might have a friend in prison for debt to the Government [Turkish law imprisons a debtor until his debt be paid]; you might come to me and say, 'My friend is in prison for a debt which he can never pay, I beg you for my sake to pardon and release him.' I am a man; I might not want to hurt your feelings or deny you anything as my friend; I might pardon him; but if I did so I should be wronging the whole people. If God can do that kind of thing he is no more righteous than I am; I cannot believe that of him."

I thought Sir Ahmed's answer a good one and was interested to see how the Bishop would reply. But he said not a word more and I began to realize that this was one of the most critical moments of my life. Here was my religion on trial before Islam; the Vali had asked a perfectly fair question, the most important question any man could

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

ask,—practically “What must I do to be saved?” and it was up to Christianity to give him a satisfactory reply. If it could not it was not worth while as a religion. What could the Bishop have said?

I had got so far in my thought when Sir Ahmed, speaking loudly, as if to the far end of the table, but with his eyes turned slightly toward me, said, “Doctor Ussher, what do you say?” I did not know what to say, but I remembered the promise of Christ Himself, “Before governors and kings shall ye be brought for my sake . . . but when they deliver you up be not anxious how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak”; and I prayed with all my heart, “O God, give me an answer.” Without a moment’s hesitation I replied, and the answer came so distinctly as an answer to the prayer and was so far beyond what I alone was capable of saying that I feel it a duty to put it on record:—

“Your Excellency, if you will permit me I will use your own illustration; I will make a little change in it, I will call you the king; you have a son who is a friend of mine and loves me; I am in prison for a debt to the Government on which I

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

cannot pay one in a thousand. Your son comes to you and says, 'Father, my friend is in prison for debt; can you not pardon and release him?' You reply, 'My son, I too love him and do not want him to be in prison, but I cannot pardon him, for if I did I should be wronging the whole people. I must treat all alike.' 'Well, Father, will you let me pay his debt and he go free?' 'Yes, my son, if he will accept it I will not only let you pay the debt, but I will participate with you.'

"The son, without waiting to ask whether I accept or not, goes at once to the proper office, pays the debt, and it is marked on the books that my debt is paid. He receives a receipt upon which is the Government seal stating that my debt is paid, and now I am free. But I do not know it. Then he comes to the prison with the receipt and says, 'Rise, Brother, you are free, your debt is paid, I have paid it.'

"I may take one of three courses. I may draw myself up haughtily and say, 'No, I will not accept it, I will not be under obligation to any one!' forgetting that, being in debt, I am already under obligation and this would be but a shifting of the obligation. Should I do this I would un-

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

necessarily wound one who for love of me has already made a great sacrifice which cannot be taken back. It is on record that my debt *is*, not that it *will be*, paid; to refuse would be unworthy of me.

“But I might sit moping, with my head in my hands, and say, ‘I wish it were so! But I cannot believe it.’ ‘But I tell you it is so; see, here is the receipt. Get out of the prison and test it,’ he might say. ‘No, I dare not, the police might find me and take me back to greater shame!’

“Should he force me from the prison, how would I behave? Not believing in my heart that I was free, I would look sharply this way and that in the street, lest a policeman might see me; should I escape to my house I would not dare to go near the door nor the window lest some one see my shadow and betray me to the police, and imprisonment in my house would be worse than imprisonment in the prison. Without faith, or belief, in the heart there is no liberty. This, too, would be ungrateful.

“The third thing I might do and ought to do, when he tells me he has paid my debt and I am free, is to fall at his feet and say, ‘I thank you. I have nothing to give in return,’—since

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

my pennies to his pounds would be an insult, — ‘but I shall endeavor by my life to show my thanks.’

“Then I would go out of prison, as they did on Liberty Day when Abdul Hamid was deposed and all the prisons were thrown open; every man was free; men who were sentenced to be hanged, those who were imprisoned for life, or were confined, hopeless, for debt, rushed into the street shouting, ‘Azad! Azad!’ (Free! Free!) It would be joy to me to tell every one that I was free and who set me free.

“But this is not all — instead of letting me return to my hovel where there is nothing but poverty he takes me to his beautiful home. There he gives me the Hamam [Turkish bath], the most thorough cleansing known. My prison clothes with all their filth are thrown into the fire, and that is the end of my past life. Then he brings me his own beautiful garments of colored broadcloth and silk, and, clothed as a prince, he brings me to you, O King, and says, ‘Father, this is my brother!’ And you say, ‘Come, my son, from this day you are my son. You shall take my name upon you; I will entrust it to you and you will honor it. In my name

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

you shall go in and out; all that I have is yours; you shall share it with your elder brother.'

"This," I said, "is as I understand Christianity. God is the King. Jesus Christ, his Son, paid my debt and yours, too, yours just as much as mine. *I* believe it and know I am free; if *you* will believe it, it will mean as much to you as it does to me.

"Now," I said, "what will be my attitude toward the Prince? I see him coming down one of the narrow streets on horseback; some one has dumped a load of firewood in the street, filling it up; he cannot pass, what shall I do? Wait until he comes and say, 'What will you give me to remove this obstruction from your way?' Or will I not, as soon as I see him coming, set to work with all my might to remove the obstruction, and then, when he passes, step aside and salute him with joy, glad that I have been able to do something to show my gratitude for what he has done for me? If he should offer to pay me, I would say, 'No, I did not do it for pay. I rejoice that I can do something to show my appreciation of what you have already done for me.'"

"So!" said the Vali, knitting his brow; "and do you mean to tell me that the hospital and

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

schools you have here are to show your gratitude to God for something He has already done for you, and not for the purpose of winning some new favor from God?"

"Yes, sir, exactly."

"Well, I had not thought of it so before."

We all sat silent about the table until Sir Ahmed arose; then those on the right passed toward the reception-room door and waited there for the Vali to enter first; those on the left passed down the length of the table and around the end toward the rest. Just as I reached the farther end of the table Sir Ahmed, who was still standing at the head, threw up his hand, and all stood silent and motionless. Then, pointing his finger at me, with flashing eyes he sternly said, "But, Doctor Ussher, you say 'Jesus Christ, the Son of God.' God is one; He neither begets nor is begotten; how can you say the Son of God?"

The scene was dramatic. It was as if I stood before a court. I replied:—

"Your Excellency, I am talking to you in your language. If I were talking to you in my language, English, I should be able to say to you things which I cannot say in Turkish, because your language has neither the word nor the

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

thought. For instance, in a little while I shall say to you [and I said it in English], 'I am going home.' When I translate that into Turkish I have to say, 'Ava giderim' [I am going to the house], and then I must explain that when I say I am going to the house I do not mean that I am going to the building. I mean I am going where there is a companion, a family, love; where every member of the household thinks unselfishly for every other member—to the sweetest place on earth. By a long process I must explain to you that when I use your word I mean something different from what you have always understood by it.

"When God talks to man He uses man's language and is limited by it. He uses our words and then, perhaps by a long process, explains that He means something different from what we have been accustomed to understand from them. When God speaks of Jesus as his *Son*, He uses the best term that we have, but He does not mean simply a man born of a woman, as we have been accustomed to understand the word."

Here our conversation was interrupted, to be resumed when I went to pay my dinner call the following Friday morning. We were sitting

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

with a window between us and the sun was shining into the room. I put my hand into the ray of light and asked:—

“Your Excellency, what is this?”

“Why, that is the sun,” he replied, in a tone of surprise.

“Is *this* the sun, or is that it which we see up there in the sky?”

“There is no difference; it is all the one light.”

“Well, is that the sun that we see, or is there a body back of it that no man has seen at any time, but the light declares it?”

“Yes, I suppose there is a body that we know through the light.”

“Is there one sun, or two? Which is the sun?”

“One sun, they are inseparable.”

“Now,” I said, “when I put my hand in the light I feel something; what is it?”

“It is the sun.”

“Yes,” said I; “it is a power that goes down into the blackness and death of the earth, takes hold of the life in the seed, and brings up the beautiful grass and flowers and trees. What is it?”

“It is the sun; without the sun there is no life.”

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

“Your Excellency, is there one sun, or three suns?”

“One sun.”

“Which is the sun, the light, the body, or the power?”

“It is all one and inseparable.”

“Well, Your Excellency, if you have no difficulty in recognizing a trinity in the sun with three things so distinct as the light, the body, and the power, why should you have difficulty in recognizing a trinity in the Godhead? God loved man and wished to manifest Himself to him. The manifestation of Himself He calls his Son, just as your poets speak of the light as the son of the orb; and your Koran speaks of Jesus as ‘Noor Allah’ [Light of God] and ‘Ruh Allah’ [Spirit of God]. We Christians do not worship three gods as you accuse us of doing, but one God; God the Father, ‘whom no man hath seen at any time’; God the Son, who said, ‘He that hath seen me hath seen the Father’; and God the Spirit, the power or influence that comes from the Father and the Son into your heart and mine and teaches us what He wants us to be and do — all One Inseparable God.”

There were no more threats of deportation,

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

and before a great while the Turks of Van made complaint to Constantinople that the Vali was too friendly to the Christians. He was removed from his position, but being a man of great power and ability he rose again and became Vali of the most important province in Turkey. When the order was given from Constantinople to deport and destroy the Armenians he refused absolutely to obey. He gave up a very large salary and allowed himself and his family to be banished and their lives endangered. The last I heard of him he was living on a farm in the interior of Turkey near Tokat where Henry Martin died. I have wondered sometimes how many of us who profess to be Christians would have measured up to the standard of that man who had never made any profession of faith in Christ. If we believe that Jesus The Christ *paid* our debt on Calvary, not that he is going to pay it on the judgment day or at some future time, does it not behoove us to ask ourselves, Are we showing our thanks by our lives? and How are we going to show our thanks?

KHARABA

IN the fall of 1899 I was transferred from my first mission station in Harpoot to Van. On the twelve-days horseback journey through a mountainous region I was accompanied by the usual Government guard or zabtieh. The village guest-rooms in the interior of Turkey provide little more than shelter for the traveler, so I carried with me bedding, folding cot, camp-chairs, lantern, and provisions.

One day we were fifteen hours in the saddle. There was a cold October rain, and when the sun set it became so dark that I could not see my hand six inches from my face. The only way in which I could follow my guide (a zabtieh) was by laying my hand on his horse's flank as he rode along in the darkness.

Suddenly I felt the zabtieh's horse drop away and, fearing something serious had happened, halted Nedjib. However, I heard the rattling of stones as the other horse walked on, so followed, down a gully, through a small stream and up the other side, and then I heard the zabtieh dismount and grope along a wall till he found a door, on which he pounded vigorously.

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

Soon there was a voice from within calling in Armenian, "Who is it?"

"Open!" answered my zabtieh in Turkish. Three times this dialogue was repeated; the third time the zabtieh shouted, "It is a consulos (foreigner). Open the door and let him in."

"Go to my neighbor; he has a better house; my house is not fit."

"Open!!"

"My house is not fit; go to my neighbor; he has a better house."

"Open!!!" yelled the zabtieh, and afraid to disobey any longer, the man opened the door about two inches, placing his foot firmly behind it, and against the light from within we could see the profile of a villager peering into the darkness. I addressed him in Armenian. "Open the door, brother, and let us in. It is cold and wet and dark; let us in that we may spend the night."

Surprised at hearing his own language spoken, he threw the door wide open and stood gazing while I dismounted, approached him, and again asked for admission.

"Oh, sir," said he, "my house is not fit. Go to my neighbor; he has a better house."

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

"That does not matter. You let us in and we will make the house 'fit,'" I replied.

With Oriental courtesy he then stepped out of the doorway, and waving his hand toward the interior, said, "Enter, the house is yours."

We passed into a large room, the roof of which was supported by posts; in the far right-hand corner it had fallen in — the unrepaired damage of massacre times. The rain was drizzling through, making a puddle on the earthen floor; close by a lot of poles were laid against the wall, thus forming a chicken coop; here, too, were a wooden harrow, and a plow of the kind used in the time of Virgil — a little more than the forked branch of a tree. To the left was a large fireplace and an immense copper pot in which was stewing something which emitted a very offensive odor. A small *jirak*, or native lamp made of a piece of clay which had been flattened and the edges turned up and then burned in the fire, was on the shelf over the fireplace. A dip wick hanging over its rim emitted a smoke that made us cough. Everything was black with smut. In the far corner to the left were some large grain pots the height of a man, and a pile of dried manure used for fuel.

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

"You see, sir; I said my house was not fit," said my host.

"Never mind, we will make it fit," again I replied, and calling my muleteers, I had them remove the farm implements and carry the foul-smelling pot to another part of the house. They swept the dusty earthen floor and spread my bright-colored Turkish rug at the right side of the fireplace; my folding cot-bed and camp-stools were set up on this; the provision-box was put on the other side of the hearth, the top of it forming a table; last of all I got out my American lantern with its crystal-clear chimney, lighted it, put it in place of the *jirak*, and lo, what a transformation!

These villagers were far from civilization and had probably never seen a lamp with a chimney before. They gazed open-mouthed, then ran to the back of the house to call the women to come and see the wonderful light and the beautiful things the foreigner had brought. The women in turn ran out to call the neighbors, and soon there were lined up against the wall about a dozen men, picturesque in their white felt caps and colored turbans, black and gold jackets, gaudy silk shirts, and wide straight trousers.

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

I invited my host to eat with me. In shocked surprise he replied: "Oh, sir! that would never do! In my house you must eat of my food, but, sir, I have nothing. Nothing but a little bread and some madzoon."¹

"Never mind," said I; "bring your bread and madzoon, and I will eat of your food and you shall eat of mine."

So we sat around my provision-box, the zab-tieh, my host, and I; and I questioned the young man about himself and his village. His name was Garabed and the name of the village was Kharaba.

He was about twenty-seven years of age, the head of a family of twenty, his elder kinsmen having been killed in the massacre. The village church had been destroyed and its priest slain. Once a year at Easter a monk from a distant monastery would come to the village and celebrate mass. There was no school.

"Are you a friend of the Lord Jesus?" I asked him.

His jaw dropped and a stupid, far-away look came over his face as he grunted interrogatively. I repeated the question with the same result,

¹ Fermented milk.

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

then changed the form of it, and asked, "Is the Lord Jesus a friend of yours?"

Quick as a flash he answered, "No, sir, he could n't be."

"Why not?"

"My heart is too black. Jesus could not be a friend of mine."

"Why is your heart too black?"

Without hesitation, but with a look of sadness and shame, he lowered his voice and replied: "I swear and lie and steal. Jesus could not be a friend of mine."

I urged that he was just the kind of sinner to whom Jesus wanted to be a friend, but again came the stupid, far-away look, and he did not seem to understand. Discouraged, at last I proposed that we should have family prayers before retiring. He evidently did not know what I meant, but nodded acquiescence. Anxious to have some native do the reading, I asked for a Bible, but was told there was none in the village, and no one who could read it. I then got out my own Armenian Bible from my saddle-bags and prayed to be guided as to what to read. The book opened to Revelation 3:20, and I read, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me."

Instantly I saw the parable. I reminded the young man how I had come to his door and knocked, and he had said to me, "Go to my neighbor; my house is not fit," just as he was saying to Jesus, "My heart is too black." I reminded him that I had said, "Just let me in and I will make it fit." I had not asked *him* to clean up; as soon as he had said, "Enter, the house is yours," I had had my men remove his poor belongings, sweep the floor and bring in the handsome rug and the chairs and the wonderful light which he called the neighbors to see. "Just say the same to Jesus, 'Come in! My heart and life are yours,' and *He* will clear away all the lying and stealing and blasphemy and make the heart a fit place for Himself. He will bring in beautiful things and a wonderful light which will attract others."

As I explained it thus a light broke over his face.

We prayed together, and then I retired, my host standing about to serve me in any way he could. As I was about to get into bed he asked

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

timidly, "Sir, wouldn't you let me read that book?"

"What! *Can* you read?"

"When I was a boy I wanted very much to learn, so I ran away to the monastery, and the monks taught me a little. I think I could read it."

So I marked some passages, turned down the corners of the pages and left the book with him. I awoke at midnight to find him sitting on the carpet with the Bible on the little camp-stool and the lantern hanging from the mantel-shelf. He was following each word with his finger and spelling out every syllable. I slept and awaked at two o'clock and he was still poring over the book, just then spelling out John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." I slept again, and when I rose at four o'clock he was still reading, and there was a light on his face which was not the light of the lantern.

When I left that morning I offered him money for the accommodation of the night, but he would not accept it. As I was putting the Bible in my saddle-bag, he asked if I would give it to

BEFORE GOVERNORS AND KINGS

him. Since it was the only one I had with me, and I might need it somewhere else on the road, I promised to send him another copy. This I secured the next day in Mush from a colporteur of the American Bible Society.¹

Garabed died three years later of cholera, but he left his mark on the life of the village. I found there, when I passed through in August, 1914, a school and a church, the fruit of that night's experience, and a neat, two-story house was standing where the dingy, ruined hovel had been.

The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
U . S . A

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 9999 10025 782 1

